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CURRENT LITERATURE

BOOK REVIEWS

A textbook of grasses

We are familiar with books treating grasses from the standpoint of taxonomy or of agriculture, but to make this group the basis of a textbook rather than a book of reference is something unusual. Such a book has been written by HITCHCOCK,¹ and appears as one of "The rural textbook series," under the editorship of L. H. BAILEY. The two parts are "Economic agrostology" and "Systematic agrostology," so that the economic and taxonomic aspects of the group are prominent; nevertheless, the treatment is dominated by the textbook idea, and it is distinctly a teaching book. The titles under "Economic agrostology" are economic classification of grasses, forage plants, cultivated pastures, meadow plants, hay and green feed, lawns, grasses used for miscellaneous purposes, weeds, and grass crop areas. Under "Systematic agrostology" there is a notable textbook introduction under the following titles: morphology of the vegetative organs, morphology of the floral organs, ecology, and principles of classification. This introduction is followed by a taxonomic presentation of the group, which includes a key to all the genera found growing wild or in common cultivation in the United States. The more important genera are described more fully, as they should be, and the principle of selection has been to familiarize the users of the book with the grasses that deserve most attention.

The book will certainly prove very useful to a large and growing constituency, which should include not only rural communities and agricultural colleges, but also students of botany in colleges and universities.—J. M. C.

MINOR NOTICES

Flora of Jamaica.—The third volume of FAWCETT and RENDLE'S *Flora of Jamaica*² begins the Dicotyledons. The first volume, published in 1910, included the orchids; while the second volume, not yet published, will include

¹ HITCHCOCK, A. S., A textbook of grasses with especial reference to the economic species of the United States. 8vo. xvii+276. figs. 63. New York: Macmillan. 1914. \$1.50.

² FAWCETT, W., and RENDLE, A. B., *Flora of Jamaica*, containing descriptions of the flowering plants known from the island. Vol. III. Dicotyledons (Piperaceae to Connaraceae). 8vo. xxiv+280. figs. 113. pls. 5. Published by the British Museum. 1914.

the remainder of the Monocotyledons. It is estimated that the Dicotyledons will be completed in four volumes, making the completed work contain six volumes. Preceding the presentation of the families, there is a list of works referred to in the text, a list of names of collectors with the dates of their collections, a conspectus of the families, and a key to families.

The contrast with north temperate floras is striking. Out of 38 families presented, such conspicuous northern ones as Caryophyllaceae (7 spp.), Ranunculaceae (4 spp. of *Ranunculus* and *Clematis*), Cruciferae (6 spp.), and Rosaceae (9 spp.) are negligible elements of the Jamaican flora; while the large families are Urticaceae (55 spp.) and Piperaceae (52 spp.), the largest genera being *Pilea* (42 spp.) and *Peperomia* (38 spp.). The genera number 115 and the species 347, so that, omitting the two large families, the genera average only two species each.—J. M. C.

Flora of New Guinea.—In continuation of the Dutch exploration of the flora of New Guinea, two additional fascicles have appeared.³ Previous parts were reviewed in this journal.⁴

The fascicle first cited contains the Liliaceae by HANS HALLIER, including 7 genera and 23 species, 8 of which are new; and Piperaceae and Meliaceae by C. DE CANDOLLE. The list of Piperaceae includes 15 species of *Peperomia*, 10 of which are new, and one species of *Piper*; while the Meliaceae are represented by the description of 12 new species.

The second fascicle cited contains the mosses by MAX FLEISCHER, a new genus (*Brotherobryum*) being described in Dicranaceae, and 6 new species in other genera; and Ericaceae by J. J. SMITH, 19 new species being described, mostly in *Vaccinium* and *Rhodendron*. The same author also describes a new *Clethra* and a new *Corsia*.—J. M. C.

Micrography of Javanese woods.—The fourth part of JANSSONIUS' micrography of the woods of Java has appeared,⁵ including the Calyciflorae. The previous parts have been noticed in this journal,⁶ the first notice describing the general purpose of the work. The present part begins with the Connaraceae and ends with Rhizophoreae. With all the species there are given

³ Nova Guinea. Résultats de l'expédition scientifique Néerlandaise à la Nouvelle-Guinée en 1907 et 1909 sous les auspices de Dr. H. A. LORENTZ. Vol. VIII. Botanique. Livraison VI. 4to. pp. 989-1048. pls. 180-188; the same, L'expédition en 1912 et 1913 sous les auspices de A. FRANSSEN HERDESCHEE. Vol. XII. Botanique. Livraison II. 4to. pp. 109-172. pls. 29-54. Leide: E. J. Brill. 1914.

⁴ BOT. GAZ. 49:464. 1910; 55:462. 1913; 57:342. 1914.

⁵ JANSSONIUS, H. H., Mikrographie des Holzes der auf Java vorkommenden Baumarten. Vierte Lieferung. 8vo. Vol. III. pp. 1-336. figs. 183. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1914. M 6.

⁶ BOT. GAZ. 43:345. 1907; 47:616. 1909; 52:67. 1911.